



CID Code of Conduct

Understanding the Code of Conduct and its implication for your organisation

What is the Code of Conduct?

The CID Code is a voluntary, self-regulatory sector code of good practice that aims to improve organisational effectiveness and international development outcomes. It is also designed to increase stakeholder trust by enhancing the transparency and accountability of signatory organisations. The CID Code is based on the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct, which was developed about 15 years ago and updated in 2010. The CID Code of Conduct was adopted by members at the 2014 AGM.

How is the Code structured?

The Code sets out standards in three areas of accountability:

- **Programme Principles:** including obligations for effectiveness in aid and development activities, human rights and working with partner agencies.
- **Public Engagement:** including obligations on the member organisation to be ethical and transparent in marketing, fundraising and reporting.
- **Organisation:** including obligations for governance, management, financial controls, treatment of staff and volunteers, complaints handling processes and compliance with legal requirements.

Benefits of the Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct helps to 'professionalise' the whole sector through:

- Providing an opportunity for CID members to improve effectiveness of development outcomes.
- Better management of risk for the sector in New Zealand by boards with respect to donors.
- Assisting CID members with learning and sharing of information and good practice within the membership.
- Providing an effective tool for organisational development and continuous improvement.

- Increasing accountability and transparency – placing CID members as leaders in their field.

“Completing the CSA focused our minds on the importance of using best practice and brought different strands of the organisation together to discuss and document them”, says Seth Le Leu, International Director of Policy and Programmes, World Vision New Zealand.

Implications for signatory organisations

The Code will be 'phased in' over three years from 2015-2017. CID will provide assistance, support and training around the implementation of the Code for all members. However, member organisations will have the task of making the Code work for them while working towards compliance.

Staff working for signatory organisations will need to understand the Code obligations while governance bodies and senior managers will need to ensure obligations are being met.

By becoming Code compliant, members give funders (government, private and public donors) assurance that they are working to agreed professional and ethical standards. It is up to signatory organisations to decide how to engage with staff, their governance bodies, wider stakeholders and funders. Funders and donors are increasingly demanding more transparency and accountability from development NGOs. The Code gives this assurance.

“Investing in working through the obligations as a team has been really valuable for the whole organisation”, says Pauline McKay, CEO of CWS.

Compliance

Members will be required to complete the Code of Conduct Compliance Self-Assessment (CSA) form (in writable PDF) every two years. Your organisation can assess each of the obligations in terms of being 'compliant', 'partially compliant', 'not compliant' or 'not applicable'. Only a few obligations are mandatory¹.



Compliance only relates to what your organisation does. For example, humanitarian obligations will only apply to organisations that work in humanitarian/disaster situations.

It's important to note that many of the principles and obligations are progressive, meaning that organisations can indicate that they are progressively implementing these obligations over time and provide a 'plan of action' for this process.

It is proposed that all current members will become compliant (in phases) by the AGM in 2017. Members will be asked to complete the CSA in batches. Group 1 comprising six members undertook the CSA process in 2014 and Group 2 began in April 2015.

The Chair of the Board of each member organisation should sign off on the CSA as an indicator that the boards of the NGOs are conversant with the Code and accept responsibility for Code implementation.

Assistance for members

Every effort will be made to assist members to become Code compliant. This is a code of good practice and is designed to help organisations improve their international development practice. There are proposed provisions for the termination of membership if an organisation cannot reach the bar over time, but all practical assistance would be provided to avoid that outcome. CID has appointed a half-time person, supported by members' fees, to work solely for and with members to help them achieve compliance.

Code of Conduct logo

When member organisations are fully compliant with all applicable areas of the Code, they will be granted Signatory status and be able to use the Code of Conduct logo on their websites and other promotional material.

Process for new members

New members will be required to submit a completed CSA as part of the membership application. New members must be compliant with at least the mandatory principles at the time of being granted membership. New members will undertake to become fully compliant with respect to other relevant principles and obligations within one year of being granted membership.

Code of Conduct Committee

The Code of Conduct Committee (CCC) was established as standing Committee of the CID Board through amendments to the constitution, adopted at the 2014 AGM. The aim of the CCC is to adjudicate on matters of Code compliance and complaints in relation to the Code of Conduct for all current members and those organisations seeking to become members of CID in the future. It will develop its policies and procedures.

The Committee will have an independent Chair, a special expert appointed by the CID Board and three member representatives elected by the CID membership. The Chair of the Committee will report to CID Board meetings and to the AGM.

It is proposed that the Committee will meet three times a year, or as is required, especially over the next three years as CID works to get current members compliant and then to ensure members remain compliant.

Resources

Further information on the Code of Conduct can be found at www.cid.org.nz including the [Code of Conduct](#) and the [Implementation Reference Guide](#).

ⁱ Mandatory principles are: B.1.5 – non-development activity, B.2.3 – control of fund and resources, B.3.4 – child protection, B.5.1 – emergency management (if undertaken).

